

CASCADIAN MINERALS

GOVERNMENT SURVEY OF
THE CASCADE RANGE.

Gold and Silver Found at Various Points, Averaging From \$10 to \$25 Per Ton—Much Unexplored Country Yet to Be Found in Northern Washington—Coal Prospects Are to Be Found in Abundance Everywhere.

In a recent publication of the United States geological survey called "A geological reconnaissance across the Cascade range near the 49th parallel," Messrs. George Otis Smith and Frank C. Calkins give some interesting details regarding the mineral resources of that part of the state of Washington. This reconnaissance was made in connection with an inspection of the northwest boundary line, undertaken at the request of the secretary of state.

Okanogan valley has been the scene of mining operations for a considerable period. The search for placer gold dates back to the time of the original survey of the boundary when coarse gold was found on the Similkameen, immediately south of the 49th parallel, in quantities that caused great excitement.

In later years development work has been carried on to a considerable extent in the gold quartz mines, although there was less activity in 1901, the year when Messrs. Smith and Calkins visited the district, than a few years before.

The Palmer mountain tunnel, near Loomis, had been driven for several thousand feet into greenstone, and had cut 28 veins. The country rock is granite and the vein material quartz and pyrite, with free-milling gold except where galena occurs in association. The highest value in these lead ores is \$10, but the average gold value is reported as about \$25, with silver never exceeding four ounces.

In the Okanogan mountains, from Mount Chopaka west to Pamyten river and along the higher part of the Hazomeen range, the country in the vicinity of the 49th parallel appears to be barren of ore deposits. In the lower valley of Pamyten river the alluvial gravels were thoroughly test-bitted many years ago without promising results.

In the vicinity of Barron, as well as below, on Slate and Ruby creeks, there have been mining operations. Several mines were worked at Barron and prospectors are active throughout the Slate Creek district. Recently, hydraulic mining on a large scale was attempted at the mouth of Ruby creek, where placers once yielded rich returns to the miners, but the extensive plant, which includes a long and expensive flume, has proved a failure. Prospecting has been done on the upper Skagit in the vicinity of Lightning creek, but no success has been reported.

The Mount Baker district is a more promising field for investigation. Some veins of free-milling gold have been found and partly developed. The first find of importance in this district was made as late as 1897, and the mine that was developed in consequence is the only one that could be said to be on a producing basis in 1901. This is the Lone Jack, one of the Post-Lambert group of claims, on the eastern slope of Bear Mountain and near the head of the west fork of Silicia, or Sileze creek. The vein is four to five feet of clear-looking, solid quartz, and the ore, which occurs throughout the vein, is both free gold and telluride. It was reported as averaging \$25 to \$30 to the ton.

Another type of ore deposit is at the Grand Excelsior mine on Wells creek, about one mile southeast of the bridge over the Nooksack. Sulphides occur here scattered through an irregular body of mineralized rock that appears to be near the surface and approximately parallel with the slope.

Other properties on Tummeahai creek and in the vicinity of Hannegan and Twin Lake basins were visited by Messrs. Smith and Calkins, but underground development had not reached a point where much could be ascertained as to the true value of the ore deposits. Gold appears to be the principal ore value, but both silver and copper ore are also reported.

Productive coal mines are found in the extreme northwest part of Washington at Cokedale and at Blue canyon. In Skagit valley, near Hamilton, there are also coal prospects in beds, but no development has been accomplished at that locality. None of these localities was visited in the course of this reconnaissance, and of others that were visited none appears sufficiently encouraging to warrant development. Among them was a prospect in the Swauk formation in the hills southwest of Wenatchee. It is noteworthy that the important coal measures in the Cascade mountains southwest of this locality are not in the Swauk formation, but in the younger Roslyn formation. Three coal prospects in the vicinity of the international boundary that were visited are briefly described.

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